

**Report to Public Safety Committee  
re a Public Safety Bond Measure  
or a Community Enhancement Bond Measure**

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Information taken from the Green Ribbon Task Force on Parks minutes May 27, 2010:

*Property tax* - local option levy: voters dislike property tax levies - revenue from levies can be used for a wide range of needs including capital improvements, buying land, operations and maintenance. Typically levies run for five years and then must be re-authorized by the voters

*General Obligation Bonds*: fund capital improvements - 5 percent of bond proceeds could be used for maintenance and operations but IRS is watching - 20 year life typically

**History Time Line for the November 4, 2008 Ballot Measure 26-98**

March 2007 - Mayor Bemis convenes a public Community Safety Summit

May 2007 - 34 member Blue Ribbon Community Safety Task Force convened  
DJIA (Dow Jones Industrial Average) over 13000

December 2007 - Blue Ribbon Community Safety Task Force report presented to City Council

February 2008 - Council approval would have been required to place Local Option Levy on May 2008 Primary ballot (subject to double majority rule). *We now know the double majority rule would not have been a problem because the Obama-Clinton race had not been settled.*  
DJIA below 13000

May 2008 - Council by 4-0 vote hires Matrix Consulting Group to evaluate long-term Police and Fire needs but "this study is unrelated to the 11/4/08 levy" - Matrix report due late November 2008 which confused some voters

May 2008 - Gresham Police Department Community Attitude Survey conducted  
DJIA at 13000

July 2008 - Survey report issued - 46% would support levy (many enthusiastically); 31% don't know (Parks Task Force consultant recommends 60% survey support)

July 2008 - Council approves placing the Local Option Levy on the November 2008 ballot.  
DJIA barely above 11000 and then it tanked after September 19, 2008

**BALLOT CAPTION, QUESTION, and SUMMARY as approved by Council July 2008:**

CAPTION: FIVE-YEAR LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR INCREASED POLICE SERVICES

QUESTION: Shall Gresham impose \$0.97 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for five years beginning in 2009-2010 for increased police services? This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

SUMMARY: Revenue generated from this levy would fund increased police services in Gresham. Levy funds would allow the City to hire 36 additional sworn police positions and 12 non-sworn police personnel. Levy funds would be used to target gangs, drugs, property crimes (including burglary and theft), family crimes (including child and elder abuse, domestic violence, and sex offenses), and provide an overall increased police presence in the community through increased patrol and traffic enforcement.

The funds generated by the levy would provide dedicated funding to add 36 trained and fully-equipped officers to the current police force. Levy revenue would be placed in a special revenue fund for the specific purpose of providing increased police services.

Approval of this local option levy would allow the City to provide increased police services for Gresham residents. The proposed rate will generate approximately \$5,950,000 in 2009-2010; \$6,171,000 in 2010-2011; \$6,397,000 in 2011-2012; \$6,566,000 in 2012-2013; and \$6,725,000 in 2013-2014 for a total of \$31,809,000.

October 2008 ballots mailed

**DJIA below 9000**

November 2008 Ballot Measure 26-98 receives 46% Yes votes; 54% No votes

Measure fails by 2,796 votes    Votes cast in election    39,484    Votes cast on measure    36,870

Flipping 1399 No votes (especially in the 5 southern precincts) would have changed the outcome

**DJIA barely above 9000**

Spring 2009 **DJIA hits bottom - below 7000**

**Conclusions:** A successful campaign requires adequate funding, a professional consultant, support/boots on the ground from both Police and Fire, adequate number of key volunteers, ability to target key precincts (survey results sorted by zip code not helpful)

January 2009 - **Matrix report** issued/some findings: (only the Police portion is usable)

Officers are in reactive mode 71% to 81% of the time

Between 7 a.m. and 1 a.m. less than 20% of their time is proactive enforcement

50% proactive level requires 16 additional officers and 9 additional detectives (along with the necessary increase in civilian support staff)

The current police department facility is at least 4,000 square feet too small

### **2007 Blue Ribbon Task Force Report on Community Safety**

On December 4, 2007 a Task Force Final Report was presented to City Council. The following is a brief summary of the report, the tasks and recommendations by the task force.

## Summary

The city of Gresham's Blue Ribbon Task Force was convened to examine and recommend solutions to the growing problem of crime. The following recommendations were approved unanimously by the 34 members of the Task Force.

The Task's Force principal recommendation is that the Gresham Police Department should have **more officers working the streets**. An increase of approximately one dollar per thousand of assessed property value would pay for a range of 34 to 40 officers and a range of civilian staff of 12 to 14.

The Task Force recommends referring to the voters in November 2008 a 5 year levy that raises \$6 million dollars which increases the police budget by nearly a third.

The Task Force recommends that a **citizen review board** would review the progress achieved throughout the life of the levy and make an **annual report** to the City Council to say whether the levy is achieving the desired effects of combating crime.

## Tasks and Recommendations

### **Charge 1: Gain Knowledge of Operations**

#### Tasks:

- Analyze current crime data and concerns. Gain a working knowledge of the Gresham Police Department.
- Review successful best practices.

#### Response:

The Task Force underwent a substantial education process hearing from line-level police officers who described day to day operations in each program area. They heard from supervisors, crime prevention specialists, and police administration. They toured the department, and went on ride-alongs to gain a better understanding of the officer's ability to police proactively.

The Task Force heard about best practices and reviewed a report put together by a working group. This document detailed "ideal" service levels for the police department and acted as a menu of options for the Task Force to consider.

### **Charge 2: Define the Problem**

#### Tasks:

- Define the community "call to action" and develop an action plan to promote community education, awareness, and engagement.
- Identify the key law enforcement issues faced by the citizens of Gresham.

#### Recommendation:

Generally, the task Force supports an overall increase in police presence, which would improve response time and enable officers to provide outstanding service even in minor infractions (such as car break-ins and other minor property crimes).

**The Task Force believes that a Citizen Police Academy is a very productive first step.**

Task:

- Identify the community's need for law enforcement services and programs and recommend programming to address those needs.

Recommendation:

**The Task Force's specific program recommendation focuses the following four key enforcement areas.**

**1. Family Crime Unit**

**2. Youth and Crime Prevention**

**3. Gangs and Drugs**

**4. Increased Police Presence**

Task:

- Research ways to reduce crime - and the perception of crime - along mass-transit corridors. Make recommendations for action.

Recommendation:

The city needs to partner with Tri-Met to pursue creative solutions to security issues associated with mass transit.

### **Charge 3: Identify Resources**

Tasks:

- Identify available community resources, gaps, and disconnects.
- Recommend proper allocation of government and community-based resources, services, and programs.
- Consider the creation of new fiscal resources need to increase Gresham's policing staffing levels and fund programs necessary to specially address Gresham's safety needs.

Recommendation:

The Task Force believes the Police Department needs to have an increase in funding to address the increased level of crime and to enhance Gresham's livability.

Their recommended action plan is as follows;

- Submit to voters a ballot measure for increasing policing services.
- The levy should be a property tax measure that is between .50 cents and \$1 dollar per thousand dollars of assessed value.
- Directly fund the Police Department.
- New money must be focused on specific areas so voters understand what the measure is buying.
- The measure should be voted on in the November, 2008 general election.
- Be clear about what the levy does not buy.
- Continue to aggressively seek grants and other means of funding,
- The ballot title language needs to be as specific as possible.

#### **Charge 4: Investigate Possible Collaboration**

Task:

- **Identify ways for citizens to become more engaged in combating crime. Make recommendations for how the City of Gresham can best engage citizens to make the community safer.**

Recommendation:

The Task Force recommends using crime prevention specialists gained in the levy to support citizen efforts to operate Neighborhood Watch programs.

Task:

- Search for efficiencies to be gained from even greater cooperation among metro-area agencies including law enforcement, neighboring jurisdictions, regional, state, federal government, and transit agencies.

**Recommendation:**

There needs to be continued and in some cases increased cooperation with Tri-Met, Multnomah County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies.